South Carolina Department of Education

Professional Development Standards for South Carolina

What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future, the highly regarded report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, asks this nation to get serious about standards for both student and teacher performance and calls for the reinvention of teacher professional development as a means to that end. …To play its central and essential role in standards-based reform, professional development for educators must be designed and based on standards representing the best available knowledge in the field. The standards point out that effective staff development not only includes high-quality training programs with intensive follow-up, but that it must also employ other growth-promoting processes such as study groups, action research, teacher networks and peer coaching. The standards also make it clear that staff development is not something that is reserved exclusively for teachers. Everyone who affects learning—from the Board of Education to classified/support staff—must continually improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to ensure high levels of learning for all students.

> (Standards-Based Reform Requires Standards-Based Staff Development by Dennis Sparks and Stephanie Hirsh, June 1998)

Background

Section 59-24-50, Education Accountability Act of 1998, required the South Carolina Department of Education to develop or adopt programs that meet national standards for professional development and focus on the improvement of teaching and learning. Programs funded with state resources must meet these standards and must provide training, modeling, and coaching on instructional leadership and school-based improvement.

In October 1999, in response to the state legislation, the Office of Professional Development in the State Department of Education enlisted the National Staff Development Council to support the implementation of professional development standards for our State. Over 250 educators from South Carolina's school districts, the State Department of Education, and the Executive Board of the South Carolina Staff Development Council met to craft professional development standards and indicators for South Carolina.

The South Carolina Professional Development Standards are based upon national standards for professional development. The national standards for staff development were developed by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) in collaboration with American Association of School Administrators (AASA), Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Education Association (NEA), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), National Middle School Association (NMSA), and representation from higher education, foundations, and school district staff members from across the country. The South Carolina Professional Development Team gratefully acknowledges the framework and standards developed by the National Staff Development Council.

Organization

Effective staff development that produces results for adults and students addresses organizational culture, processes of adult learning, and content for learning.

The standards are divided into three categories:

> **CONTEXT standards** address the organization, system, and culture in which the new learning will occur and be implemented.

PROCESS standards refer to the design and delivery of staff development. They describe the processes used to acquire new knowledge and skills.

CONTENT standards refer to the actual skills and knowledge that effective educators need to possess to produce higher levels of student learning.

The rubric contains the statement of the standard, which is a succinct statement of the expectation for professional development. It establishes the level of performance to which all organizations should aspire. Accompanying the standards are indicators that describe the ways that the standard might be implemented. The indicators provide examples of evidence that the standard has been met.

These standards were designed to be used by educators across the State at all levels of the educational system–the State Department of Education, school districts, schools, and state- operated programs. These tools provide direction for planning, monitoring, and assessing professional development. While they may resemble a "checklist," they will have the greatest impact on organizational and individual learning if the standards are accessed during

- initial planning phases of state, district, and school level professional development;
- review of the state test scores and mid-course corrections in school improvement;
- evaluation of individual staff development efforts;
- writing of comprehensive school plans; and
- assessment of professional development plans.

These standards provide an opportunity to assess your current practice and use the standards and indicators to improve your practice. The implementation of these standards will support the far-reaching objectives of improved teaching and learning throughout South Carolina.

These standards are available on the web at http://www.state.sc.us/sde/educator/training.htm

South Carolina Professional Development Standards

AREA	STANDARDS	SAMPLE INDICATORS
CONTEXT **Context addresses the organization, system, or culture in which new learning will be implemented**.	1. Effective professional development fosters the norm of continuous improvement.	a. Educators constantly revisit and renew their organizational goals. b. Staff can articulate the kinds of learning opportunities they access throughout the year. c. Staff use the ADEPT* performance appraisal process to assess progress and influence continuous improvement. *ADEPT – South Carolina's comprehensive performance appraisal process for staff designed to promote excellence in teaching
	2. Effective professional development requires strong leadership for continuous improvement.	a. Administrators, teacher leaders, school board members, community leaders, and others advocate for quality professional development. b. School and district leaders participate with staff in professional development activities. c. Morale increases as a result of staff empowerment and effectiveness.
	3. Effective professional development is aligned with the organization's mission and strategic plan, is linked to student achievement, and is adequately funded by the budget.	a. Professional development resources are coordinated to ensure that the professional development activities are aligned with the school improvement plans. b. Professional development is adequately funded. Priorities are set. c. Effective professional development is perceived as essential for achieving the purposes of the organization, is valued as an integral part of the strategic plan, and is seen as a key factor in improving student learning.
	4. Effective professional development provides adequate time for staff members to learn and work together to accomplish the organization's mission and goals.	a. Professional development resources are coordinated to ensure that the professional development activities are aligned with the school improvement plans. b. Professional development is adequately funded. Priorities are set. c. Effective professional development is perceived as essential for achieving the purposes of the organization, is valued as an integral part of the strategic plan, and is seen as a key factor in improving student learning.

AREA	STANDARDS	SAMPLE INDICATORS
PROCESS **Process standards refer to "how" we implement or deliver professional development. These standards describe the processes used to acquire new knowledge and skills**	5. Effective professional development provides decision-makers with information about organization development and systems thinking.	a. All stakeholders are involved in the professional development. The stakeholders (at the state, district, or school level) complete a self-study of their effectiveness each year. b. Barriers to effective professional development within the organization are addressed. **c.** Site-based management teams use shared decision-making processes to determine professional development priorities.
	6. Effective professional development is based on knowledge about adult learning and models this understanding in all activities	a. The learning climate is collaborative, informal, and respectful. The providers of all professional development are credible. b. Professional development emphasizes how the learning can be used/applied. c. Professional development relates the learning to the learners' goals and allows the learners to make choices linking their individual growth plans with school goals.
	7. Effective professional development provides for three phases of the change process: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization.	a. Appropriate assessments occur at each phase and appropriate interventions occur. b. All critical phases of the change process are addressed in the planning, design, implementation, and evaluation of programs. c. Collaboration is occurring among teachers to support change or innovation.
	8. Effective professional development priorities are established following a careful analysis of disaggregated data regarding goals for student learning.	a. Data is provided that links staff development initiatives and intended adult and student results. b. Gaps in achievement among all groups are addressed. c. The district strategic plan, school improvement plans, and individual improvement plans incorporate goal-setting using all available data.
	9. Effective professional development provides a framework for integrating and relating innovations to the mission of the organization.	a. Improvement plans include a carefully and thoughtfully designed framework for integrating the innovations to be implemented. b. All implementation efforts include descriptions of how each innovation relates to other ongoing programs and to the mission of the organization. c. Successful practices are maintained and unsuccessful practices are abandoned when decisions are made to change goals or strategies.

	10. Effective professional development programs require an ongoing evaluation process.	a. Evaluations are designed to assess a variety of program outcomes, including participants' reaction to the program, participants' learning, participants' use of new knowledge and skills, impact on student outcomes, and impact on the organization. b. Evaluation is considered an integral part of staff development program planning and implementation. c. Evaluation data include multiple sources of information and focus on all levels of the organization. Teachers use classroom assessments to measure immediate impact of professional development investments.
	11. Effective professional development uses multiple approaches to improve student success.	a. Multiple formats are evident: action research, study groups, curriculum development, self-study, use of technology, and training. Methodology is appropriate to the intended outcomes. b. Training includes theory, demonstration, practice, feedback, and coaching. c. A variety of readiness and professional development activities occur at each school site rather than uniform activities throughout a system.
	12. Effective professional development provides the follow-up necessary to ensure improvement.	a. All training designs include plans for follow-up. Follow-up is monitored and supported with human and financial resources. b. Desired changes in on-the-job behavior improve student performance. c. The ability of staff members to analyze and self-correct their performance improves. d. Opportunities to network and share ideas and resources are promoted.
	13. Effective professional development uses the stages of group development to build effective, productive, and collegial teams.	a. Faculty and administration develop the skills to work collaboratively. b. Staff members know about and use interdisciplinary team organization and instruction. C. Staff share responsibility to conduct meetings, make shared decisions, solve problems, and work collegially.
AREA	**STANDARDS**	**SAMPLE INDICATORS**
CONTENT Context addresses the organization, system, or culture in which the new learning will be implemented.	14. Effective professional development increases administrators' and teachers' understanding of how to provide school environments, curriculum, and instruction that are responsive to the needs of all students.	a. School improvement occurs as educators see the discrepancy between the needs of children and the school's current practices. b. Teachers adopt research-based programs and instructional strategies that are appropriate and effective for all children. c. Student work is used to inform the staff about student progress and is used as a means by which to adjust instruction.
	15. Effective professional	a. Educators develop the ability to respond to

	development facilitates schoolwide and classroom-based management strategies that maximize student learning.	the uniqueness of each child and each situation. They implement effective classroom management strategies. b. Students' self-esteem increases their success in the classroom. c. There is a comprehensive schoolwide guidance plan incorporating student documentation. d. Data on student attendance, suspension, disciplinary referrals, and expulsions are reported and used to inform planning.
	16. Effective professional development addresses diversity to ensure an equitable and quality education is provided to all	a. Populations are identified by gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and special needs. b. Effective strategies to engage diverse learners and learning styles in the educational process are identified. c. Professional development incorporates diversity issues into all programs.
	17. Effective professional development prepares educators to demonstrate high expectations for student learning.	a. Increasing numbers of students experience a challenging core curriculum and improve their achievement. b. Staff participates in training about academic and professional development standards. c. Evidence of high expectations exists in lesson plans, unit plans, performance assessments, school improvement plans, and district strategic plans. d. Teachers and administrators believe students can learn at high levels.
	18. Effective professional development helps teachers and administrators engage families and communities in improving all children's academic achievement.	a. Active school/business partnerships support student learning. Volunteers and mentors are available to support student learning. b. School staff and parents/families increase communication about student academic progress, and a partnership plan for student progress is created. c. Participation of parents/families in educational activities at school and home increases.
	19. Effective professional development prepares teachers to use various types of performance assessment in their classroom.	a. Professional development on the design and use of assessments is provided. b. Modifications and accommodations are made to meet special needs of students. c. Assessment strategies are shared among teachers, schools, and districts.